

A DAY AT CAPE MAY.

We Can All Go There When Our Ship Comes In.

Meanwhile We Have to Be Satisfied with Reading of the Beauty and Grandeur of the Ocean and the Charms of the Pebby Beach.

(Special Washington Letter.)

There is no longer any excuse. It is permitted to grow into luxury. You will all be envied when you hear the story, and yet I believe not one of my readers will be jealous.

Having resolved and accepted an invitation to make a trip to Cape May, N. J., and be a guest at the principal hotel there for four days, I started on Friday morning with my wife and baby and arrived at the Cape about four o'clock in the afternoon. First let me tell you about the hotel.

It is one of the largest establishments of the kind on the Atlantic coast and can readily accommodate thousand and provide good bedrooms, as well as the best of food, with prompt attention to every one of that number. It is situated about one hundred yards from the beach, and is so planned and erected that nearly every room faces the sea and receives the ocean breeze. That same ocean breeze seems to be coaxed in its efforts to fill the lungs and invigorate the systems of all who are fortunate enough to visit the coast.

The beach at Cape May is half a mile long, and the sand is fine and easily dried. I took my walk along the shore, and the water was very cold, though it was still warm enough to bathe in. Under the circumstances, of course, there is no undressing along the beach, and no loss of life occurs at this point except through carelessness.

To redress the evil of this pleasure to a minimum opposite each one of the hotels along the beach there is situated a life-boat manned by four sturdy sailors. When the bathing hour commences these busy lads push their life-boat through the breakers and row out beyond the furthermost of bathers, and they remain there until really at a moment's notice to rush to the relief of anyone who may by any mishap be in danger of drowning.

Although it is a generally accepted rule in the cities of the east that oysters are only fit for food during the months from September to April, the people along the Jersey shore regard them as healthful and wholesome the whole year around. At Cape May every meal commences with raw oysters on the half shell fresh taken from the salt waters near by. We had half a dozen and soft shell oysters, also two steaks and soft shell crab, all the time we were having the water come over his head, except as the big waves roll in. Under the circumstances, of course, there is no undressing along the beach, and no loss of life occurs at this point except through carelessness.

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Saturday night, in the great dining-room, which is larger than the celebrated east room at the white house, and in the adjoining ballroom, the young people enjoyed topsy-turvy trips for about three hours. On Sunday night, in the same rooms, a grand concert was given by the Cape May orchestra, headed by New York, Philadelphia and Washington talent. Whether it was the novelty of the occasion or not, it seemed to me that, in the salt air, the orchestra was more perfect and the vocalization more effective and enjoyable than I have ever experienced in any house of worship.

Although beneath the splendid roof, we seemed so near to nature that a wistful sense pervaded the throng with a sense of longing to that which must be beyond the hearts and minds of men when the temple were God's first temples, ere man had learned to bow the shaft and hold the architrave. The interludes were songs of praise from the lovingly-shored ocean, as the snow-covered waves ceaselessly kissed the silvery strand. One young lady in the improvised choir sang a peculiarly appropriate old hymn, a portion of the words being:

"To thine of Jesus he waked up the sea."

White the waves were rolling, murmuring on the strand.

When I lay within a ton, on the crystal wave what

As I thought the waiting people in me laid."

That sacred concert Sunday night impressed me deeply. There were words said and songs sung which enabled me to turn back over the curtain of time; away back to the happy home of boyhood when the happiest of all the week was the day when my basket of clothes was cleaned, every button and every garter and shawl inspected by mother before we started for Sunday school and joined in singing some of the very songs which now are

the air which comes sweeping in over the being deep. A little while a few blocks in the city—say half a mile—was one tired and weary in summer time. Yet along the ocean front one may strroll by the hour, covering many miles, without thinking of the world, or entertaining the idea of weariness, so that Sunday night, from ten o'clock until midnight, I made the walk alone or alone back and forth along the smooth beach breathing the pure air and unconsciously humming old tunes to the accompaniment of the whispering, roaring, moaning, crooning and occasionally dragon-like cry of the tossing waves. Once, very unexpectedly to the strolling dreamer, there came an unusually emphatic wave which seemed determined upon a conquest of the entire beach, and it broke nobly on the sand, then chased merrily upward over the smooth coast until it ran over my shoe tops, then silently hastened back to the bosom of the mighty ocean, mingling with the other surging breakers, so that I might never discover the culprit drops which thus disturbed me.

But as no one takes cold from such a briny wather, I continued my stroll until the midnight bell struck, then went to bed and slept soundly until the sun was high above the horizon, and the hotel bell boy was banging at my door calling me to breakfast.

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